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Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development

Statement submitted by Comité de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agrícolas, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Statement

CATA welcomes the thematic focus on employment, decent work, and sustainable development for the upcoming 2006 High Level and Coordination Segments of the Economic and Social Council, in particular the fact that ECOSOC has recognized the crucial importance of ensuring the labour and human rights of workers as a key factor in achieving sustainable development.

CATA therefore submits the following recommendations to ECOSOC, in order to inform the process leading towards the General Assembly High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in September 2006:

1. **Receiving States should recognize the contribution to their economies of migrant workers by granting such workers the opportunity to remain with regular status and to integrate into Society, if that is their wish.** So-called "temporary migration" programs, while often touted as mutually beneficial, in fact allow receiving states to enjoy a reliable supply of cheap labour while denying those workers the full range of rights, social services, and opportunities that full-time residents have access to. In addition, temporary migration programs require workers to spend long and repeated periods of time separated from their families, and almost invariably result in both gender and age-based discrimination in hiring practices.

2. **Member states should grant to immigrant and migrant workers, including irregular immigrants, the same rights afforded to other workers, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Conventions of the International Labour Organisation.** Migrant and immigrant workers around the world are rarely afforded the same rights under the law as other workers, which create an incentive for employers to seek out immigrants for hire, in particular those without regular status. This in turn undermines the legal rights of non-immigrant workers by forcing them into a *de facto* position of competition with the immigrant workforce.

3. **Member states, in particular industrialized nations of the global North ("receiving states"), should ratify the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*.** The treaty cannot provide meaningful benefit to migrant workers and their families until it is ratified by those industrialized states that receive the majority of migrants worldwide.

4. **Member states should reduce the root causes of worldwide migration by eliminating discriminatory trade and economic policies in the industrialized North.** It is clear that trade liberalization between states of vastly different wealth does not lead towards sustainable development. Furthermore, the rhetoric of trade liberalization and free markets often does not match policy: Agricultural subsidies in the global North continue to disrupt local, agriculture-based economies in poor nations, and trade agreements tend to allow for the free flow of goods, capital, and profits across borders, but not the free flow of people (i.e. labour). The economic desperation resulting directly and indirectly from such economic policies exacerbates the irregular migration that receiving states so regularly criticize.